

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A sheet feeding device, comprising:

a sheet pick-up device configured to pick up a first sheet from stacked sheets and to feed the first sheet by contacting the first sheet while rotating;

a sheet separating device configured to separate the first sheet from a second sheet to be fed by the sheet feeding device and to feed the first sheet to pull-out rollers that are the first rollers downstream from the sheet separating device in a sheet feeding direction with the first sheet by the sheet pick-up, the sheet separating device comprising:

a rotary member configured to feed the first sheet in a sheet feeding direction by contacting the first sheet while rotating; and

a roller configured to rotate in a direction opposite to the sheet feeding direction to prevent feeding of the second sheet with the first sheet;

a drive device configured to drive at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member to rotate;

at least two detecting devices, both located before the sheet separating device, side-by-side, substantially in line in the sheet feeding direction and configured to detect a leading edge of the first sheet before the first sheet reaches the pull-out rollers; and

a control device configured to control sheet feeding,

wherein the control device is configured to change a rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member based on a detection result of the at least two detecting devices and a drive amount of the drive device.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The sheet feeding device according to claim 1,
wherein the control device measures the drive amount of the drive device from when
the drive device drives the sheet pick-up device to pick up the first sheet,

wherein the control device changes the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet
pick-up device and the rotary member if a first one of the detecting devices does not detect
the leading edge of the first sheet and if the drive amount of the drive device measured by the
control device exceeds a first threshold value, and

wherein the control device further changes the rotational speed of at least one of the
sheet pick-up device and the rotary member if the first one of the detecting devices does not
yet detect the leading edge of the first sheet and if the drive amount of the drive device
measured by the control device exceeds a second threshold value which is greater than the
first threshold value.

Claim 3 (Original): The sheet feeding device according to claim 1,
wherein the control device changes the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet
pick-up device and the rotary member based on a comparison result between the drive
amount of the drive device and one of a plurality of threshold values.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The sheet feeding device according to claim 1,
wherein at least one of the at least two detecting devices is disposed downstream of
the sheet separating device in the sheet feeding direction.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The sheet feeding device according to claim 1,
wherein at least one of the at least two detecting devices is disposed on a sheet
feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the sheet separating device.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The sheet feeding device according to claim 1,
wherein a first detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed on a sheet feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the sheet separating device, and is configured to detect the leading edge of the first sheet, and a second detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed downstream of the sheet separating device in a sheet feeding direction and is configured to detect the leading edge of the first sheet,

wherein the control device is configured to measure a first drive amount of the drive device from when the drive device drives the sheet pick-up device to pick-up the first sheet, and to measure a second drive amount of the drive device from when the leading edge of the first sheet is detected,

wherein the control device is configured to change the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member if the leading edge of the first sheet is not detected based on an output of the first detecting device and if the first drive amount of the drive device exceeds a first threshold value, and

wherein the control device is configured to change the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member if the leading edge of the first sheet is not detected based on an output of the second detecting device and if the second drive amount of the drive device exceeds a second threshold value.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The sheet feeding device according to claim 1,
wherein a first detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed on a sheet feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the sheet separating device, and a second detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed downstream of the sheet separating device in the sheet feeding direction, and

wherein if a first slip ratio of the first sheet fed in the sheet feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the first detecting device exceeds a second slip ratio of the first sheet fed in the sheet feeding path between the first and second detecting devices, and if the control device has changed the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member before the second detecting device detects the leading edge of the first sheet, the control device is configured to return the changed rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member to its original rotational speed.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The sheet feeding device according to claim 1, further comprising:

a display device configured to display information,

wherein a first detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed on a sheet feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the sheet separating device, and a second detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed downstream of the sheet separating device in a sheet feeding direction,

wherein if a first slip ratio of the first sheet fed in the sheet feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the first detecting device exceeds a first slip threshold value, the control device is configured to display first information on the display device, and

wherein if a second slip ratio of the first sheet fed in the sheet feeding path between the first and second detecting devices exceeds a second slip threshold value, the control device is configured to display second information on the display device.

Claim 9 (Original): The sheet feeding device according to claim 8,
wherein if the first slip ratio consecutively exceeds the first slip threshold value in the sheet feeding, the control device is configured to display the first information on the display device, and

wherein if the second slip ratio consecutively exceeds the second slip threshold value in the sheet feeding, the control device is configured to display the second information on the display device.

Claim 10 (Original): The sheet feeding device according to claim 7,
wherein the control device is configured to measure a first drive amount of the drive device during a first interval from when the drive device drives the sheet pick-up device to pick up the first sheet to when the first detecting device detects the leading edge of the first sheet, and the control device is configured to measure a second drive amount of the drive device during a second interval from when the first detecting device detects the leading edge of the first sheet to when the second detecting device detects the leading edge of the first sheet,

wherein the first slip ratio is obtained by a following calculation:

$$A1/B1$$

where A1 is the first drive amount, and B1 is a first theoretical value of the drive amount of the drive device to feed the first sheet in the sheet feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the first detecting device, and

wherein the second slip ratio is obtained by a following calculation:

$$A2/B2$$

where A2 is the second drive amount, and B2 is a second theoretical value of the drive amount of the drive device to feed the first sheet in the sheet feeding path between the first detecting device and the second detecting device.

Claim 11 (Original): The sheet feeding device according to claim 8,

wherein the control device is configured to measure a first drive amount of the drive device during a first interval from when the drive device drives the sheet pick-up device to pick up the first sheet to when the first detecting device detects the leading edge of the first sheet, and the control device is configured to measure a second drive amount of the drive device during a second interval from when the first detecting device detects the leading edge of the first sheet to when the second detecting device detects the leading edge of the first sheet,

wherein the first slip ratio is obtained by a following calculation:

$$A1/B1$$

where A1 is the first drive amount, and B1 is a first theoretical value of the drive amount of the drive device to feed the first sheet in the sheet feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the first detecting device, and

wherein the second slip ratio is obtained by a following calculation:

$$A2/B2$$

where A2 is the second drive amount, and B2 is a second theoretical value of the drive amount of the drive device to feed the first sheet in the sheet feeding path between the first detecting device and the second detecting device.

Claim 12 (Original): The sheet feeding device according to claim 1,

wherein the drive amount of the drive device comprises a drive time.

Claim 13 (Original): The sheet feeding device according to claim 1,
wherein the drive device comprises a pulse motor, and the drive amount of the drive device comprises a pulse number.

Claim 14 (Original): The sheet feeding device according to claim 1,
wherein the sheet pick-up device comprises a sheet pick-up roller.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): An image reading apparatus, comprising:
an image reading device configured to read an image of an original document at an image reading position;

a sheet feeding device configured to feed the original document to the image reading position, the sheet feeding device comprising:

a sheet pick-up device configured to pick up a first original document from stacked original documents and to feed the first original document by contacting the first original document while rotating;

a sheet separating device configured to separate the first original document from a second original document fed with the first original document by the sheet pick-up device, the sheet separating device comprising:

a rotary member configured to feed the first original document in an original document feeding direction by contacting the first original document while rotating; and

a roller configured to rotate in a direction opposite to the original document feeding direction to prevent feeding of the second original document with the first original document;

a drive device configured to drive at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member to rotate;

at least two detecting devices, both located before the sheet separating device, side-by-side, substantially in line in the original document feeding direction and configured to detect a leading edge of the first original document; and

a control device configured to control original document feeding,

wherein the control device is configured to change a rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member based on a detection result of the at least two detecting devices and a drive amount of the drive device.

Claim 16 (Original): The image reading apparatus according to claim 15,

wherein the control device is configured to measure the drive amount of the drive device from when the drive device drives the sheet pick-up device to pick up the first original document,

wherein the control device is configured to change the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member if the leading edge of the first original document is not detected and if the drive amount of the drive device measured by the control device exceeds a first threshold value, and

wherein the control device is configured to change the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member if the leading edge of the first original document is not detected and if the drive amount of the drive device exceeds a second threshold value which is greater than the first threshold value.

Claim 17 (Original): The image reading apparatus according to claim 15,

wherein the control device is configured to change the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member based on a comparison result between the drive amount of the drive device and one of a plurality of threshold values.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The image reading apparatus according to claim 15, wherein at least one of the at least two detecting devices is disposed downstream of the sheet separating device in an original document feeding direction.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The image reading apparatus according to claim 18, wherein at least one of the at least two detecting devices is disposed on an original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the sheet separating device.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The image reading apparatus according to claim 15, wherein a first detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed on an original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the sheet separating device, and a second detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed downstream of the sheet separating device in an original document feeding direction,

wherein the control device is configured to measure a first drive amount of the drive device from when the drive device drives the sheet pick-up device to pick up the first original document, and to measure a second drive amount of the drive device from when the first detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document,

wherein the control device is configured to change the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member if the first detecting device does not detect the leading edge of the first original document and if the first drive amount of the drive device exceeds a first threshold value, and

wherein the control device is configured to change the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member if the second detecting device does not detect the leading edge of the first original document and if the second drive amount of the drive device exceeds a second threshold value.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The image reading apparatus according to claim 15, wherein a first detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed on an original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the sheet separating device, and a second detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed downstream of the sheet separating device in an original document feeding direction, and wherein if a first slip ratio of the first original document fed in the original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the first detecting device exceeds a second slip ratio of the first original document fed in the original document feeding path between the first and second detecting devices, and if the control device has changed the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member before the second detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document, the control device is configured to return the changed rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member to its original rotational speed.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The image reading apparatus according to claim 15, further comprising:

a display device configured to display information,

wherein a first detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed on an original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the sheet separating device, and a second detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed downstream of the sheet separating device in an original document feeding direction,

wherein if a first slip ratio of the first original document fed in the original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the first detecting device exceeds a first slip threshold value, the control device is configured to display first information on the display device, and

wherein if a second slip ratio of the first original document fed in the original document feeding path between the first and second detecting devices exceeds a second slip threshold value, the control device is configured to display second information on the display device.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The image reading apparatus according to claim 22, wherein if the first slip ratio consecutively exceeds the first slip threshold value in the original document feeding, the control device is configured to display first information on the display device, and

wherein if the second slip ratio consecutively exceeds the second slip threshold value in the original document feeding, the control device is configured to display second information on the display device.

Claim 24 (Original): The image reading apparatus according to claim 21, wherein the control device is configured to measure a first drive amount of the drive device during a first interval from when the drive device drives the sheet pick-up device to pick up the first original document to when the first detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document, and the control device is configured to measure a second drive amount of the drive device during a second interval from when the first detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document to when the second detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document,

wherein the first slip ratio is obtained by a following calculation:

$$A1/B1$$

where A1 is the first drive amount, and B1 is a first theoretical value of the drive amount of the drive device to feed the first original document in the original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the first detecting device, and

wherein the second slip ratio is obtained by a following calculation:

$$A2/B2$$

where A2 is the second drive amount, and B2 is a second theoretical value of the drive amount of the drive device to feed the first original document in the original document feeding path between the first detecting device and the second detecting device.

Claim 25 (Original): The image reading apparatus according to claim 22,

wherein the control device is configured to measure a first drive amount of the drive device during a first interval from when the drive device drives the sheet pick-up device to pick up the first original document to when the first detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document, and the control device is configured to measure a second drive amount of the drive device during a second interval from when the first detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document to when the second detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document,

wherein the first slip ratio is obtained by a following calculation:

$$A1/B1$$

where A1 is the first drive amount, and B1 is a first theoretical value of the drive amount of the drive device to feed the first original document in the original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the first detecting device, and

wherein the second slip ratio is obtained by a following calculation:

$$A2/B2$$

where A2 is the second drive amount, and B2 is a second theoretical value of the drive amount of the drive device to feed the first original document in the original document feeding path between the first detecting device and the second detecting device.

Claim 26 (Original): The image reading apparatus according to claim 15,
wherein the drive amount of the drive device comprises a drive time.

Claim 27 (Original): The image reading apparatus according to claim 15,
wherein the drive device comprises a pulse motor, and the drive amount of the drive device comprises a pulse number.

Claim 28 (Original): The image reading apparatus according to claim 15,
wherein the sheet pick-up device comprises a sheet pick-up roller.

Claim 29 (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus, comprising:
an image reading device configured to read an image of an original document at an image reading position;
an image forming device configured to form a duplicate of the image read by the image reading device;
a sheet feeding device configured to feed the original document to the image reading position, the sheet feeding device comprising:
a sheet pick-up device configured to pick up a first original document from stacked original documents and to feed the first original document by contacting the first original document while rotating;

a sheet separating device configured to separate the first original document from a second original document fed with the first original document by the sheet pick-up device, the sheet separating device comprising:

a rotary member configured to feed the first original document in an original document feeding direction by contacting the first original document while rotating; and

a roller configured to rotate in a direction opposite to the original document feeding direction to prevent feeding of the second original document with the first original document;

a drive device configured to drive at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member to rotate;

at least two detecting devices, both located before the sheet separating device, side-by-side, substantially in line in the original document feeding direction and configured to detect a leading edge of the first original document; and

a control device configured to control original document feeding,

wherein the control device is configured to change a rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member based on a detection result of the at least two detecting devices and a drive amount of the drive device.

Claim 30 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 29,

wherein the control device is configured to measure the drive amount of the drive device from when the drive device drives the sheet pick-up device to pick up the first original document,

wherein the control device is configured to change the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member if the leading edge of the first original

document is not detected and if the drive amount of the drive device measured by the control device exceeds a first threshold value, and

wherein the control device is configured to change the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member if the leading edge of the first original document is not detected and if the drive amount of the drive device exceeds a second threshold value which is greater than the first threshold value.

Claim 31 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 29,

wherein the control device is configured to change the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member based on a comparison result between the drive amount of the drive device and one of a plurality of threshold values.

Claim 32 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 29,

wherein the at least one detecting device is disposed downstream of the sheet separating device in an original document feeding direction.

Claim 33 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 32,

wherein the at least one detecting device is disposed on an original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the sheet separating device.

Claim 34 (Previously Presented): The image forming apparatus according to claim 29,

wherein a first detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed on an original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the sheet separating

device, and a second detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed downstream of the sheet separating device in an original document feeding direction,

wherein the control device is configured to measure a first drive amount of the drive device from when the drive device drives the sheet pick-up device to pick up the first original document, and configured to measure a second drive amount of the drive device from when the first detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document,

wherein the control device is configured to change the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member if the first detecting device does not detect the leading edge of the first original document and if the first drive amount of the drive device exceeds a first threshold value, and

wherein the control device is configured to change the rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member if the second detecting device does not detect the leading edge of the first original document and if the second drive amount of the drive device exceeds a second threshold value.

Claim 35 (Previously Presented): The image forming apparatus according to claim 29,

wherein a first detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed on an original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the sheet separating device, and a second detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed downstream of the sheet separating device in an original document feeding direction, and

wherein if a first slip ratio of the first original document fed in the original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the first detecting device exceeds a second slip ratio of the first original document fed in the original document feeding path between the first and second detecting devices, and if the control device has changed the rotational speed

of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member before the second detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document, the control device is configured to return the changed rotational speed of at least one of the sheet pick-up device and the rotary member to its original rotational speed.

Claim 36 (Previously Presented): The image forming apparatus according to claim 29, further comprising:

a display device configured to display information,

wherein a first detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed on an original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the sheet separating device, and a second detecting device of the at least two detecting devices is disposed downstream of the sheet separating device in an original document feeding direction,

wherein if a first slip ratio of the first original document fed in the original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the first detecting device exceeds a first slip threshold value, the control device is configured to display a first information on the display device and

wherein if a second slip ratio of the first original document fed in the original document feeding path between the first and second detecting devices exceeds a second slip threshold value, the control device is configured to display second information on the display device.

Claim 37 (Previously Presented): The image forming apparatus according to claim 36,

wherein if the first slip ratio consecutively exceeds the first slip threshold value in the original document feeding, the control device is configured to display the first information on the display device, and

wherein if the second slip ratio consecutively exceeds the second slip threshold value in the original document feeding, the control device is configured to display the second information on the display device.

Claim 38 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 35,

wherein the control device is configured to measure a first drive amount of the drive device during a first interval from when the drive device drives the sheet pick-up device to pick up the first original document to when the first detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document, and the control device is configured to measure a second drive amount of the drive device during a second interval from when the first detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document to when the second detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document,

wherein the first slip ratio is obtained by a following calculation:

$$A1/B1$$

where A1 is the first drive amount, and B1 is a first theoretical value of the drive amount of the drive device to feed the first original document in the original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the first detecting device, and

wherein the second slip ratio is obtained by a following calculation:

$$A2/B2$$

where A2 is the second drive amount, and B2 is a second theoretical value of the drive amount of the drive device to feed the first original document in the original document feeding path between the first detecting device and the second detecting device.

Claim 39 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 36,
wherein the control device is configured to measure a first drive amount of the drive device during a first interval from when the drive device drives the sheet pick-up device to pick up the first original document to when the first detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document, and the control device is configured to measure a second drive amount of the drive device during a second interval from when the first detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document to when the second detecting device detects the leading edge of the first original document,

wherein the first slip ratio is obtained by a following calculation:

$$A1/B1$$

where A1 is the first drive amount, and B1 is a first theoretical value of the drive amount of the drive device to feed the first original document in the original document feeding path between the sheet pick-up device and the first detecting device, and

wherein the second slip ratio is obtained by a following calculation:

$$A2/B2$$

where A2 is the second drive amount, and B2 is a second theoretical value of the drive amount of the drive device to feed the first original document in the original document feeding path between the first detecting device and the second detecting device.

Claim 40 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 29,
wherein the drive amount of the drive device comprises a drive time.

Claim 41 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 29,
wherein the drive device comprises a pulse motor, and the drive amount of the drive device comprises a pulse number.

Claim 42 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 29,
wherein the sheet pick-up device comprises a sheet pick-up roller.

Claim 43 (Currently Amended): A sheet feeding device, comprising:
means for picking up a first sheet from stacked sheets and for feeding the first sheet;
means for separating the first sheet from a second sheet fed with the first sheet and for
feeding the first sheet to pull-out rollers that are the first rollers downstream from the means
for separating in a sheet feeding direction, the means for separating comprising:

means for feeding the first sheet; and

means for obstructing feeding of the second sheet;

means for driving at least one of the means for picking up and the means for
feeding to rotate;

at least first and second means for detecting a leading edge of the first sheet
before the first sheet reaches the pull-out rollers, wherein the first and second means
are located before the means for separating, side-by-side, substantially in line in the
sheet feeding direction; and

means for controlling sheet feeding,

wherein the means for controlling is configured to change a rotational speed of at least
one of the means for picking up and the means for feeding based on a detection result of the
at least first and second means for detecting a drive amount of the means for driving.

Claim 44 (Currently Amended): An image reading apparatus, comprising:
means for reading an image of an original document;
means for feeding the original document to an image reading position, the means for
feeding comprising:

means for picking up a first sheet from stacked sheets and for feeding the first sheet;

means for separating the first sheet from a second sheet fed with the first sheet, the means for separating comprising:

means for rotary feeding the first sheet in an original document feeding direction; and

means for obstructing feeding of the second sheet;

means for driving at least one of the means for picking up and the means for rotary feeding to rotate;

at least two means for detecting a leading edge of the first sheet, wherein the at least two means are located before the means for separating, side-by-side, substantially in line in the original document feeding direction; and

means for controlling sheet feeding,

wherein the means for controlling is configured to change a rotational speed of at least one of the means for picking-up and the means for rotary feeding based on a detection result of the at least two means for detecting and a drive amount of the means for driving.

Claim 45 (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus comprising:

means for reading an image of an original document;

means for forming a duplicate of the image read;

means for feeding the original document to an image reading position, the means for feeding comprising:

means for picking up a first sheet from stacked sheets and for feeding the first sheet;

means for separating the first sheet from a second sheet fed with the first sheet, the sheet means for separating comprising:

means for rotary feeding the first sheet in an original document feeding direction; and

means for obstructing feeding of the second sheet,

means for driving at least one of the means for picking up and the means for rotary feeding to rotate;

at least two means for detecting a leading edge of the first sheet, wherein the at least two means are located before the means for separating, side-by-side, substantially in line in the original document feeding direction; and

means for controlling sheet feeding,

wherein the means for controlling is configured to change a rotational speed of at least one of the means for picking up and the means for rotary feeding based on a detection result of the at least two means for detecting and a drive amount of the means for driving.